

Three Students Awarded SMART Scholarship

UNH top SMART producer in New England

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Three UNH students were recently awarded Science, Mathematics, and Research for Transformation (SMART) scholarships through the Department of Defense (DoD), cementing the university as a top producer of SMART scholars in the region and nationwide.

Since 2006, 28 UNH students have received SMART scholarships, making the university the top SMART-scholarship-producing institution in New England and placing it in the top 7% nationwide.

SMART scholarships are awarded to undergraduate or graduate students in STEM-related fields and include full tuition and related fees, a \$25,000 to \$38,000 annual stipend, summer research internships and employment placement within the DoD after graduation.

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“The SMART scholarship has historically been an excellent fit for UNH students,” says Jeanne Sokolowski, director of UNH’s [Office of National Fellowships](#). “Our students excel in STEM not only due to our dedicated faculty and outstanding research opportunities, but also because of their passion for service.”

Accepting offers this year are Julia Hilinski '23, Eric Smith '23 and James Wirth '23, all of whom have secured placements with the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard (PNSY) in Kittery, Maine, and will participate in internships in the summer of 2022. These internships give students unique hands-on experience at one of 200-plus innovative laboratories that exist across the Army, Navy, Air Force and Department of Defense.



Julia Hilinski '23

Julia Hilinski is an [analytics and data science](#) major from Wallingford, Connecticut, who applied for the scholarship for a chance to serve her country as a civilian and launch her career in public service.

“A career goal I have is to work in intelligence ,” says Hilinski. “Working at the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, I will gain a better understanding of the way our nation utilizes data analytics to ensure our safety.”

Hilinski has been active in many organizations at UNH, including interning for [UNH Career and Professional Success](#) and serving as chair of Wildcat Women in Computer Science, volunteering as a recycling coordinator and service chair of Partners for World Health and as a member of Engineers Without Borders. She is also in the [Honors Program](#) and a recipient of the [Fred & Gertrude Howell Scholarship](#).



Eric Smith '23

Eric Smith is an [electrical engineering](#) major from Silver Lake, New Hampshire, who applied for the scholarship based on the positive experiences of previous UNH students and alumni who have been SMART Scholars at PNSY. He sees the experience as a springboard for his career and is focused on becoming a valuable member of PNSY.

“I see this as an opportunity to expand my skillset and gain field experience while securing a position after I graduate,” says Smith. “The work they are doing at the shipyard genuinely interests and excites me personally.”

At UNH, Smith participated in the [Innovation Scholars](#) program.



James Wirth '23

James Wirth is an [engineering physics](#) major from Sherborn, Massachusetts, who applied because of the SMART scholarship’s financial support and opportunity to gain significant job experience immediately. He says he has always been interested in the unique history of shipyards and was curious to learn more about what happens at PSNY after seeing it during visits to Portsmouth.

“I always wanted to find a way to help others and working for the military to help protect and save those who are in danger will fulfill this,” says Wirth, a three-sport high school athlete who is interested in developing sports equipment that can improve the safety of competitors.

At UNH, Wirth participated in the Innovation Scholars Program. He is also a member of the Honors Program, a Presidential Scholarship recipient and was recently awarded the [Glenice Dearborn Scholarship](#) for academic merit.

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